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Cohen, Hermann (1842 - 1918)

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Cohen, Hermann (1842 - 1918)

From "The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy"



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German Jewish philosopher who originated and led, with Paul Natorp (1854-1924), the Marburg School of neo-Kantianism. He taught at Marburg from 1876 to 1912. Cohen wrote commentaries on Kant's **Critiques** prior to publishing *System der Philosophie* (1902-12), which consisted of parts on logic, ethics, and aesthetics. He developed a Kantian idealism of the natural sciences, arguing that a transcendental analysis of these sciences shows that "pure thought" (his system of Kantian a priori principles) "constructs" their "reality." He also developed Kant's ethics as a democratic socialist ethics. He ended his career at a rabbinical seminary in Berlin, writing his influential **Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums** ("**Religion of Reason out of the Sources of Judaism**," 1919), which explicated Judaism on the basis of his own Kantian ethical idealism. Cohen's ethical-political views were adopted by Kurt Eisner (1867-1919), leader of the Munich revolution of 1918, and also had an impact on the revisionism (of orthodox Marxism) of the German Social Democratic Party, while his philosophical writings greatly influenced Cassirer.

See also [Cassirer](#), [Kant](#), [neo-Kantianism](#). H.v.d.L.